George Moore's Uncensored New Book

By BENJAMIN DE CASSERES.

AMONG peoples the Irishman is the Peter Pan. He will never grow up. He is an abounding heart, a credulous, naive spirit of his soil. In the welter of world seriousness he is the child spirit, a tragic child spirit at times—compound of fancy and fisticuffs, of brawling tavern manners and impulses to curious martyrdoms. He is the antithesis of the concentrative, monorail Teutonic mind, for his attention is scattered, fly-eyed.

Between the Russian and the Irishman, at first blush, there seem unbridgeable psychic chasms; but they both partake of the blood and body of Hamlet and Don Quixote. The brain and the world are fused. There is a perpetual marriage between reality and illusion. In both, their weaknesses constitute their genius.

In Again, Out Again.

In the Irishman there is no hard and fast line between the external and the internal universes. There is indeed no line at all. To have dreamed of doing a thing is to have done it. To have done a thing is of no more importance than to have dreamed the doing of it. Synge in his great play, *The Playboy of the Western World*, gave us in the hero of that comedy the evolved and involved soul of the Irishman. He lies, exaggerates and fabricates like a troubadour poet. His imagination kindles worlds into being as he goes along. He hastily constructs his pontoon of facts when he comes to a forbidden stream and crosses it lightly or sullenly, as his digestion dictates.

Having the strength to disregard facts (Shaw's "sublime disregard of facts," says James Huneker about George Bernard Shaw), he is naturally, inherently and ineradicably a pagan, a polytheist, a legend maker, a myth maker, a monumental and immemorial super-liar. Your real honest to banshee soil Irishman puts fairy stories in stones and a soul in everything. He invents symbols, signs and omens; the voice of a Sphinx may be in his pig; the Delphic oracles speak to him out of a curious carven cloud shaped by the sea winds; the Sybils and the Norns look at him with eyes of fire from his hearth; his politics is a saga; his job a destiny.

That Irishman, George Moore.

Tremendously human, tantalizingly lovable, flamboyantly erratic, the Irishman is one of the great adventures of the human spirit on the planet. And he needs the rod of the Church.

The soul of all is in each. All of Ireland is in each true Irishman whole and undivided. And George Moore is of its very essence. He maunders and keens, brags and gives, dribbles and lies, is legendary and profane, prays and whistles simultaneously, is insipidly egotistical and impulsively generous. He drinks his cocktail while saying grace.

In his confessions, semi-comic records of his life as intellectual dilettante, hayrick Don Juan and studio transom lizard, he recalls to us for all the world Marie Bashkirtseff. In her mirror each day, each hour, Marie followed the progress of the physical disease that was eating her up. Moore also coquets with himself, although his disease is physical. He literally swims in mirrors. He examines his mustache, his wrinkles and his style each day with the anxiety of an o'erdone ballet dancer. He has the sickly self-consciousness of a Jean Jacques Rousseau. He puts down each event of the day with the precision and meticulousness of the being who has nothing to say, but who knows he will be read for the splendor of his resonant emptiness.

His effrontery carries our breath away. When it comes to immortality, he will have none of the absent treatment. He walks, whether in Dublin, London or Paris, in his homemade Valhalla and wears his literary Croix de Guerre even on his pajamas. Posterity is always drawn up in serried show before his eyes and their Ecce Homo beats against his ears even through the drawn curtains of a London taxi, where he dreams his lorn dreams of fair Parisian chambermaids.

The New Select Book.

But Moore is more truly Irish at his worst than Shaw at his best. That dear old word "pagan" will bob up when we get to writing; and the author of *A Story Teller's Holiday* (his latest book, printed privately and for subscribers only at $10 a copy for the Irish Folk-Lore Society), has unquestionably the nose for Aphrodite.

George Moore standing on Boston Common would be a delicious ironym. He would use the slang of the Archangels and the coppers would pinch him for lese Mayflower.

The "pagan" to-day sees life from an "L" train. He peeps behind curtains while the train rumbles on and he makes impersonal notes about life on the pavement beneath, the secrets of the apartment above and the rain clouds and stars overhead. He assembles all sorts of people in his train, does George Moore, and he revitalizes each one, romances about them, flies off into a magic tesserate of fancy apropos of a priest, a politician or a human being. The subway is stonily puritan in its immaculate opaqueness. Your "pagan" a la Moore rides on the top of a bus or on the "L."

Not for the Matinee Girl.

In this florid and diffuse *A Story-Teller's Holiday* there is much riding in railway carriages, adventures by night in the ruins of the Dublin of the late unpleasantness, and a great deal of journalistic tictac and efflorescent mental flub. The book is not for the Young Thing—she who sits wonder eyed and caramel jawed at the Wednesday matinee, her soul composing sonnets to the heroic legs and Hamletic eyes of the hero of a thousand and one boudoirs.

In his *Leave-Taking*, which does for preface to *A Story-Teller's Holiday* (and George's leave-takings are his camouflage for his eternal returns), he says:

"George Moore was never welcome in Grubb street, for he wished to write for men and women of letters, and this class is not recognized by the libraries as readers of books; strange that it should be so, but it is so; for while there are books for astronomers, for scientists, for doctors, for lawyers, for golfers, for cricketers, for chess players, for yachtsmen, and as for young girls in their teens voluminous literature awaits them every year, there are no books written for men and women of letters exclusively. By private printing our author has cut himself off from many readers, but the alternative was for him to cease writing."

All of which is partly true and reminds us of what Hugues Rebell, French writer, said regarding the museums, art galleries and libraries of Paris, that they should be closed to the people. There is something in this when one looks dolefully at the late struggle to make America safe for prohibition.

Alec the Smart.

In the pages following the preface Moore wanders all over Ireland, literally and historically. In the course of his foraging he runs across a half-witted fern gatherer, one Alec Trusselby, who, like all half-witted creatures who live in the open, has more to reveal than was ever found in our city man's philosophy, O Jim!

Alec has a private latchkey to a private mansion in the Irish skies and he lets George in on tiptoe, where, shoes in hand so as not to disturb Mrs. Grundy, dozing in the porter's lodge, they emerge into the Tower of Forbidden Legends. Alec has all of ancient Ireland at his tongue's end; he knows all about those ancient Tristans and Isoldes, and the bad old King Markes who are always laying the sword between lovers true.

Endless stories too that sound like Boccaccio, without the greatness of the Italian's art.

Moore has borrowed, in the dressing of these tales, told fluidly, vividly and verbosely, from the golden, smiling irony of Anatole France. There are some beautiful, heretical and blasphemous "sleepers" in these pages, the sentence dropped furtively, casually, half-unconsciously, with an art that conceals the smart, a game that Ernest Renan excelled at. Renan, that fat and dirty Michael of scepticism.

Concluded by a story that Moore himself tells to Alec. It is a story of the original triangle, involving Lilith, Eve and Adam. Cut in half the legend would make a masterpiece, but George *will* Moorender. And that the legend gets nowhere quite "makes it all the moore Mooresque."

He might have taken a chance on having this fascinating book put before the public, for even the Society for the Suppression of Spice, in their all wise and omnipotent literary Prussianism, would go to it with zest, and after a long and painful sitting would probably adjudge the work a "classic" by an Irish pagan who holds an all night license in his pocket from a power higher than themselves.

A STORY TELLER'S HOLIDAY. By George Moore. Boni & Liveright for the Irish Folklore Society. For private circulation. $10.

Capt. Dugmore's Two Boy Crusoes

By HARRY ESTY DOUNCE.

CAPT. RADCLYFFE DUGMORE, who has written a new tale for boys, is no mean zoologist; he is right up with the best photographers of wild life; he is a handy man with either pen or brush; and outside the Indian villages and the real backwoods in the Big Bush of the North, they don't make better woodsmen than he is. He is F. R. G. S., F. R. P. S., and so on. He is also a veteran of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, and was gassed for life—near Ypres, I believe. That last is a "thing of private knowledge," and mention of it may be very bad manners, but whatever any one thinks of the manners, no one will think the worse of the Captain.

His dedication reveals the fact that he has three kiddies of his own, who bossed the writing of *Adventures in Beaver Stream Camp*, which is all about Jack and Charlie, and how they get shipwrecked on the wild coast of Newfoundland with nothing but their knives and a few trout flies; and they build huts, kill big game, make Crusoe clothes and snowshoes and things, and triumphantly subsist through a glorious year by virtue of their woodcraft.

Naturally, with such supervision, the book is a dead sure bull's eye on the target at which it was aimed. It will fetch the kids all right; they'll eat it up. Some of their captious elders (none of whose business it is) will probably pick flaws in it—for the reason that although Capt. Dugmore's beasts and birds and fishes and plants are introduced with unimpeachable fidelity to nature, his boy heroes are certainly a tallish pair of marvel manipulators. For which the youngsters will like 'em all the better, and the stuffy old Daddies and Uncles can read the hunting experiences of a Col. Theodore Roosevelt.

Poor, hobbled, overconscientious grown-up! You can't go *The Swiss Family Robinson* any more. Don't you wish you could? But hand it to Junior, aetat. 9, and don't expect him on time for meals till the end of his third reading. The principle goes double for *Adventures in Beaver Stream Camp*—not to mention Harry Castlemon's works, Henty's, Kirk Munroe's and the works of every other worker whose boys' books *boys* can be counted on to like. With one superb exception in *The Jungle Books*.

Just for the fun of it the writer will bet his hat (hats are $8 this fall) that when those Dugmore kiddies come of the Jack and Charlie age, no matter how many Boy Scout tests they may have passed by then, their father will *not* maroon them on the Newfoundland coast with such implements as Charlie and Jack originally had along and leave 'em to put in a year!

Take the matter of bows and arrows. John and Charles make these with their knives, using fish line for the bow strings. Then they twang havoc among the basking salmon, the ptarmigan, the hares, the caribou herds; they assassinate a big black bear, by Robin Hood!

I knew a youth, not such a youthful youth either now I think of it, and he was in the Canadian forest on a fishing trip out of the game season and devoid of a shooting iron. And the hares and the grouse and the spruce pa'tridge displayed the most insufferable insolence—came hopping and quittering right into camp, thumbing their noses at the cooking pot. And three weeks steady trout diet had engendered a hankering for fresh meat.

And so this youth fared him forth with an axe (which Jack 'n' Charlie hadn't), and out of the wood of a fine black ash he made him a six foot bow. He was cocky about his skill at making things; he had shot bows and arrows quite a bit, and thought he was pumpkins enough to hit not only the side of a barn, but a given knot hole therein. And he made arrows, straight as dies, and feathered them with the feathers left over from a fox's dinner and tipped them with sharpened nails. And then the guide found him a hen spruce pa'tridge chaperoning her well grown brood of chicks.

I hate to go on. Those birds hadn't the smallest objection to being shot at with arrows. When one missed, they obligingly hopped closer, until the range was about two yards or less. Buck fever had nothing to do with it. When all the arrows were shot away they were retrieved and shot from the other side and then back again. Light and windage were perfect, but direct hits were *not* obtained.

The guide was a polite guide and a sobersides withal. He had never witnessed any archery before, so he was interested. Along about the sixteenth shot he excused himself and repaired to the lake shore, whence came back ill stifled, snorting sounds that made the targets rather nervous—they were the only thing that did come back during a long, long hour. At last the guide returned with three primitive stones and three birds bubbled in the pot that night. The fire was kindled with the bow and arrows.

This tragedy does not teach us that amateur game killing with extemporized bows and arrows can't be done, or that the Noble Red Man did not bring down big game with flint tips; but if your hopeful offspring plans to break, break, break—the game laws or anything else—on the cold gray Newfoundland stones Capt. Dugmore himself would probably advise you to have him take a gun.

Which is merely a symptom of garrulous anecdotage of the present writer's part, and nothing against the success of the Captain's opus with the kids, whose heroes cannot draw a bow too long. They will like the Captain's photographs and the illustrations which Philip R. Goodwin contributes.

ADVENTURES IN BEAVER STREAM CAMP. By Capt. A. Radclyffe Dugmore. Doubleday, Page & Co. $1.35.

Men in War, by Andreas Latzko, which was withdrawn from circulation by Boni & Liveright, the publishers, last June, is again being distributed. The book was suppressed in the Central Empires when it first appeared in 1917 and its author compelled to flee for safety to Switzerland. The publishers announce that *Men in War* has already gone into its eighth printing in this country and into its third printing in England.